

# Northeast Texas Area

## Area 65

# Archives Committee Information and Guidelines

Version 2.0 as of 04/21/2011

### Review Copy

Section 2.6 of the NETA Policies and Procedures states: "NETA Service Committees that choose to develop *guidelines, workbooks or pamphlets* as "service pieces" will submit them to the Area Committee for review and approval. A NETA Standing Committee service piece is defined as a document that describes how the committee will provide service to the NETA or AA as a whole."

These guidelines have been updated and approved by the NETA Archives Committee and are submitted to Area Committee members for review and approval.

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## **Foreword**

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This document serves as a general guide to inform members of the framework of the Area Archives Committee and how the NETA Archives are managed as an Area service function.

A separate guide has been developed for Groups interested in setting up an Archivist or Historian service position. It is titled "Group Archives Information and Suggested Guidelines."

These guidelines serve to complement information and recommendations defined in the Northeast Texas Area Handbook which can be found at the area website NETA65.org.

## **References**

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The NETA Archives service function is both historian and administrative in nature.

The following references are used for defining Archives policies, practices and guidelines:

<b>Title</b>	<b>GSO Publication Number</b>
AA Guidelines - Archives	(MG-17)
Archives WORKBOOK	(M-44I)
The AA Archives	(F-47)
Area Handbook	(NETA publication)
GSO Archives Policies	(R/8/97)

The *Archives WORKBOOK* is the primary source reference for the information and guidelines contained in this document. Where appropriate the source wording has been modified to adapt it for application to the Northeast Texas Area Archives Committee.

## NETA Archives Committee Information and Guidelines

### ***Archives Service Mission***

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The service mission of the NETA Archives is to:

1. Collect and preserve the history of how the AA message has been (and continues to be) carried to the alcoholic by:
  - a. Groups, members and non-alcoholic friends.
  - b. Literature (conference approved and other).
  - c. Service.
2. Conduct historical Archives displays at:
  - a. Area assemblies, conventions and workshops.
  - b. Local AA events (by invitation of Groups, Districts, Central Offices).
  - c. Regional and State events (by invitation).
3. Conduct AA history presentations.
4. Provide administrative services to the NETA Committee (and District Committees) to:
  - a. Maintain an ongoing history of Assembly Action Items and Committee Action Items.
  - b. Collect and preserve historical documents of record (i.e. records management).

### ***Composition of the Archives Committee***

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The NETA Archives committee includes the Chair and Alternate Chair, Archivist and Historian an elected Secretary and Treasurer and all members serving in an Archives or Historian service position at the Group, District or Area level plus any AA member in the Area who volunteers to serve.

The committee may approve rotating members who serve a maximum term of two years. The Archives Committee meets regularly in open sessions at the call of the NETA Archives Chair who presides over the meetings.

Archives Committee duties and responsibilities are to:<sup>1</sup>

1. Establish basic policies for the selection of archival material to be collected. These guiding policies are oriented to gathering material of historical significance and reducing the time and space of preserving random bits and pieces of dubious value.
2. Provide continuity and oversight to ensure that the NETA Archives function in a manner that is in compliance with the principles of the Twelve Steps, Traditions and Concepts. The AA publication *Archives WORKBOOK* (M-44I) is the primary literature source for defining NETA Archives policies and procedures.
3. Serve as advocates to encourage and attract members, Groups, Districts and other service entities to actively participate in Archives (or Historian) services.
4. Provide guidance and oversight in financial and expense management matters.

In summary the primary duties of the NETA Archives Committee are to:

1. Maintain oversight of Area Archives acquisitions and content.
2. Ensure Archives activities are firmly based on AA principles.
3. Encourage membership participation in Area, District and Group Archives service.

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<sup>1</sup> Reference the *Archives WORKBOOK* for further information on the Role of the Archives Committee.

## NETA Archives Committee Information and Guidelines

### ***Tools and Suggested Activities for Archives Committees***

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The *Archives WORKBOOK* provides helpful examples of possible area Archives Committee services. The primary purpose of those involved in Archives work is to collect and preserve the message of AA. However, Archives service is more than custodial activity; it also involves sharing AA's rich and meaningful heritage. Like any other AA service, it takes a few dedicated AA members willing to launch these efforts.

The list below provides suggestions and examples for Archives Committee activities. It is compiled from the experience of AA members involved in Archives Committee work in various areas.<sup>2</sup>

- Study the *Archives WORKBOOK* and related materials.
- Show the DVD "Markings on the Journey" in Archives workshops, or other AA related events, to inspire interest in AA's history.
- Create presentations about Archives Committee activities, including photos of exhibits.
- Create portable exhibits that are easily conveyable to various events, such as state or regional AA conventions, area assemblies and district or central office meetings.
- Organize old-timers meetings and invite a number of AA members with long time sobriety in the area to share their stories.
- Initiate projects and assign one task per committee member. For example, digitizing analog recordings to digital media, conducting inventories, creating finding-aids, scanning, filing and other archives related tasks.
- Host an annual Archives Open House and invite other service committees to display their work.
- Host Archives Workshops and include hands-on activities and review of the area archives collection.
- Communicate with other local Archives Committees and Archivists to share experience and glean suggestions from others involved in Archives service work.
- Develop forms, policies or guidelines, as practical, for local needs. These may include, for example: Collection Scope; Deed of Gift Form; Group History Questionnaire; Guidelines for Collecting Oral Histories; Oral History Release Form; Photocopying Policy; and Research and Access Policy.
- Produce an archives newsletter or contribute to a section in the area's newsletter highlighting archives activities or a new and exciting find.
- Distribute flyers at local AA events and include contact information for Area and District Archives.
- Distribute Group History forms at local gatherings to inspire interest in conducting histories of groups in the area.
- Produce a history book detailing the history of AA in the area.
- Begin archives committee reports at Area or District meetings with a trivia game to spark interest and enthusiasm.
- Send sharing on local Archives workshops and events to GSO.

In all of its actions, the NETA Archives Committee is guided by AA's primary purpose and Traditions. The committee is also responsible for ensuring the protection of the anonymity of members and the confidentiality of all AA records.

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<sup>2</sup> The examples were gathered from various areas by an ad hoc committee formed by the Trustees Archives Committee.

## NETA Archives Committee Information and Guidelines

### ***Archives Committee Chair Duties***

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**Summary:** the Archives Chair and committee are responsible for the preservation and safekeeping of the Area archival collection. The Archives Chair and committee maintain oversight of the archives for displays and retention of important area records and contributed artifacts and memorabilia. In conjunction with the Archives Committee, the area collection preserves and displays items related to AA history. Local historical material is sought out from old-timers, past Delegates, committee members and others with experience to share.

**Qualifications:** It is helpful and desirable to have some familiarity with archival procedures or the willingness to learn the basics of such procedures. The office holder should have a good understanding of current copyright laws and a solid understanding of the anonymity principles of the Twelve Traditions.

#### **Duties:**

1. Recruit qualified members to serve on the Archives Committee. Encourage districts and groups to establish Archivist or Historian service functions.
2. Be responsible for both the physical and intellectual integrity of the collection. It is important to ensure the privacy and protect the anonymity of members whose names are included in collected documents and digital data files.
3. Gather current and historical information about AA, especially in the area, and preserve it in a meaningful order and ensure that area Archives service activities are conducted in a manner that conforms to the Area 65 and GSO Archives Guidelines. Also ensure that copies of the guidelines are available for distribution as needed and posted to the NETA65.org web site.
4. Maintain accountability records of the inventory of the collection to properly record archives contributions. Provide copies of the inventory of the archives collection to the Archives Committee and Area Secretary.
5. Display the archives collection at area assemblies and, if requested, at other AA events.
6. Conduct AA history presentations and exhibit multi-media displays.
7. Report regularly to the Archives Committee, Area Committee and Assembly about ongoing Archives Committee matters.
8. Schedule, call and preside over meetings of the Archives Committee.

### ***Alternate Archives Committee Chair Duties***

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1. Assists the Archives Committee Chair in all aspects of the duties of that position.
2. Assumes the role of Archives Committee Chair in his/her absence.
3. As a general guideline it is highly desirable that the Alternate Chair be a candidate to assume to the position of Archives Committee Chair in the next Panel's elections.
4. In the absence of the Archivist and Historian the Alternate Chair functions in that capacity.

## NETA Archives Committee Information and Guidelines

### ***Archivist and Historian Duties***

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**Summary:** the Archivist and Historian serves as the focal point of the collection, determining what to include and work towards making the collection available to the greatest extent possible to members and those in the public realm with a valid interest in AA.

**Qualifications:** It is desirable to have reasonable familiarity with archival procedures and conservation. The office holder should have a good understanding of current copyright laws and a solid understanding of the anonymity principles of the Twelve Traditions.

**Duties:**

1. As NETA Archivist:
  - a. Administer the formal receipt and acknowledgment of contributions to the area Archives.
  - b. Organize and catalog contributions to the archives and provide an updated catalog to the Archives Committee Chair. Ensure that the archives do not become a central collection point for miscellaneous odds and ends or papers and is focused on limiting the archives collection to materials of substantive and historical value.
  - c. Report regularly to the Archives Committee, Area Committee and Assembly about new material received, history projects and recording the contributions/distribution of Archives materials. Contributions and distributions are recorded in a manner that provides a clear accountability trail.
  - d. Preserve and repair the collection and select representative samples for arrangement into traveling displays.
  - e. Assist the Archives Committee Chair in ensuring both the physical and intellectual integrity of the collection and protecting the privacy and anonymity of members whose names are included in the collection.
2. As NETA Historian research, develop and maintain:
  - a. AA history presentations for showing at groups, districts, assemblies and AA sponsored events.
  - b. An Area 65 history and digital records management system to preserve area and district records.

### ***Archives Committee Secretary Duties***

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**Summary:** the Archives Committee Secretary serves as the recorder and administrative assistant to the Archives Committee Chair for all committee meetings.

**Qualifications:** the office holder must have some reasonable proficiency in computer word processing and the distribution of email with attachments.

**Duties:**

1. Recording and distributing committee meeting minutes by email.
2. Notifying committee members by email in advance of committee meetings.
3. Assisting the Archives Committee Chair, Alternate Chair and Archivist and Historian in the preparation and distribution (by email) of the committee meeting agenda and background material for business items to be discussed at the meeting.

## NETA Archives Committee Information and Guidelines

### ***Archives Committee Treasurer Duties***

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**Summary:** the Archives Committee Treasurer keeps financial records for the committee and reports regularly to the committee. The Treasurer is responsible for submitting a proposed Archives Committee budget and the safekeeping of funds contributed by groups and members to offset Archives Committee expenses. The Treasurer also serves as auditor of the annual inventory of the archives collection.

**Qualifications:** the office holder should be a responsible person with a solid period of sobriety (4-5 years). He/she should be organized, keep good records and have some accounting or bookkeeping experience and basic computer skills. The Archives Committee Chair, Alternate Chair and Archivist and Historian are ineligible to serve as treasurer or be a bank account signatory to avoid the appearance of a conflict of interest.

#### **Duties:**

1. As directed by the Archives Committee, conduct all financial activities of the committee.
2. Receive original copies of bank statements for the committee bank account. Present the statements at Archives Committee meetings for anyone who may wish to review them.
3. Draft an annual budget for presentation to the Archives Committee for approval. Serve as financial advisor to the committee to encourage prudent management of funds and adherence to the approved budget.
4. Maintain a bank account for the deposit and disbursement of Archives Committee funds and ensure that one additional signatory is approved by the Archives Committee to cover for the absence of the Treasurer.
5. Collect contributions from groups and members and regularly deposit the funds in the checking account.
6. Disburse funds by check to reimburse travel and supply costs.
7. Report to the committee on the state of contributions and expenses. Send courtesy copies of the reports to the Area Treasurer and Area Chair through the Archives Committee Chair. The reports are presented to the Area Committee and assembly by the Archives Committee Chair for examination by all members.
8. Provide an end of year report that includes all receipts and expenditures for use in creating the following year's budget.
9. If necessary, secure a PO Box for receiving contributions.

# NETA Archives Committee Information and Guidelines

## ***Archives Committee Budget and Financial Procedures***

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All financial matters presented to the Archives Committee require substantial unanimity for approval.

Financial policies and procedures for the NETA Archives Committee are focused on: 1) the safekeeping and preservation of an archives collection that also typically has a high monetary value among outside collectors and 2) the safekeeping and prudent expenditure of funds contributed to the Archives Committee:

### **1) Archives Collection**

The archives collection is designed for use as a mobile display as opposed to display in a permanent facility. It is desirable to have no more than three (3) copies of the same item. Excess copies are contributed, with prior Archives Committee approval, to the Archives Committees of the Northwest, Southeast and Southwest Texas Areas.

A catalog of the collection is maintained by the Archivist and Historian to record the items contained in the collection. A "collector's value" is assigned to each item to calculate the collector's value for the entire collection. This is done solely to underscore the need for safekeeping and security in the administration and management of the collection.

The catalog is used to conduct an annual inventory of the collection to ensure that all items are accounted for. The Archives Committee Treasurer audits the inventory. A copy of the audited catalog is sent to the Area Secretary by the Archives Committee Chair.

The collection is securely housed in climate-controlled rental storage. Items contained in the collection are obtained through contributions from groups, members and the family of deceased members.

Archives Committee funds are not used for the purchase of artifacts or memorabilia. The sole exception to this is the purchase of new publications from AAWS and the AA Grapevine to obtain a first edition, first printing copy of new or special edition publications for the collection. Archives committee funds may also be used, with prior Archives Committee approval, for the repair or restoration of special historical items contained in the collection.

### **2) Archives Committee Funds**

Archives Committee financial policies and procedures do not apply to, or address, quarterly budgeted funds distributed by the NETA Treasurer to the Archives Committee Chair, Alternate Chair or Archivist and Historian. Those quarterly funds are accounted for under the provisions of the NETA Policies and Procedures. The funds of interest in this document are limited to contributions by groups and members directly to the Archives Committee.

Periodically, the Archives Committee will make a direct appeal to groups and members for contributions to cover expenses (typically travel expenses and supplies and materials for preservation of the collection). Funds may also be contributed by groups and members when archives exhibits are taken to groups and events. Funds received from these sources should be reported to the Archives Committee Treasurer. Any funds in excess of travel reimbursement of 30 cent per mile should be deposited in the Archives Committee bank account.

The Treasurer issues reimbursements for travel and supply costs that are not covered by the NETA annual budget distributions. Supply item reimbursements require that receipts be provided. Travel reimbursement is verified by the travel calendar portion of the Archives Committee minutes.

When expenses are reimbursed by the Archives Committee Treasurer, those expenses should not be reported on NETA expense reports given to the NETA Alternate Treasurer or Treasurer, otherwise it constitutes dual reimbursement for the expenses.

When an archives exhibit requires substantial travel mileage and/or hotel costs, the event hosts should be asked, in advance, for funding of travel and hotel costs. Funding/reimbursement of hotel costs, registration and food for an archives exhibit requires prior approval of the Archives Committee.

Travel and hotel costs related to attending the National AA Archives Workshop are not approved at this time.

## **NETA Archives Committee Information and Guidelines**

### ***NETA Archives Collection***

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The NETA Archives collection is organized into related arrangements of contributed AA historical items, artifacts and memorabilia. Where possible, materials are placed in protective covers and are contained in binders/folders that externally identify the subject matter.

The Archives Collection, as tangible assets of the Area, is comparable to other NETA resources (e.g. PC/software, audio/video equipment, etc.). The NETA Archivist and Historian is responsible for safekeeping, preservation and administration of the Archives Collection within guidelines established by the Archives Committee.

The Archives Collection is stored in a secure, climate-controlled storage area at a storage rental facility determined by the Archives Committee Chair. The cost of storage rental is a part of the Area budget.

Actions are continuing to obtain contributed Archives materials to round out the collection of literature and historical documents to:

1. Obtain early edition AA books, pamphlets, flyers and Grapevine/La Viña publications.
2. Obtain Group and service entity histories (Area, District, Central Office, etc.).
3. Obtain NETA Assembly/Committee minutes and Area Inventory minutes.
4. Obtain Area/District/Central Office newsletters, flyers, meeting minutes, etc.
5. Expand the collection to be bi-lingual.

As a general guideline, it is recommended that the Archives Collection contain a maximum of 3 copies of any publication with the goal of obtaining the earliest printings. Disposal of items in the Archives Collection is determined by the Archives Committee on a case by case basis. As a general policy, excess items will be contributed to Texas Area Archives Committees (NWTAA, SETA and SWTA) or other Area Archives Committees to include Akron Archives and GSO Archives.

The contents of the Archives Collection are recorded in an inventory report which is reviewed by the Archives Committee and presented to the Area Secretary on an annual basis at the end of the calendar year.

For Archives matters, NETA maintains a strict separation of the spiritual from the material to preclude any conflict of interest (or its appearance) in the actions of NETA Trusted Servants versus those who commercially engage in buying and selling AA artifacts and memorabilia.

The Archives Collection belongs to AA - not an individual. Archives contributions are accepted in behalf of both the Archives of Area 65 and the Archives of the General Service Board of AA. Contributions are formally acknowledged in writing to define a clear transfer of ownership from the contributor to the Archives.

### ***Digital Archives and Multi-media Displays***

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In addition to artifacts and memorabilia, the NETA Archives Collection also includes digital copies of important area, district and group records. Other digital records may consist of documents submitted by NETA service committees and members (or their family) for digital archives retention.

In some cases, the paper copies of these records are not permanently retained unless they are deemed to be of historical importance. This is done to keep physical storage requirements to a minimum and simplify information retrieval.

The digital archives may also include a variety of audio, video and other graphical material related to AA history. These materials are used for the production of multimedia displays to include slide-shows, audio/video playback, PowerPoint presentations, e-books and digital copies of historical AA documents and publications.

## NETA Archives Committee Information and Guidelines

### ***Contributions to the NETA Archives Collection***

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The items listed below would be most gratefully welcome as contributions for preservation in the NETA Archives. The list also defines the general scope of the NETA Archives Collection.

GROUPS & MEMBERS	NETA	DELEGATES & TRUSTEES	CENTRAL OFFICES
Group histories	Area history	Testimonials *	Office history *
Facility photos	Area Assembly minutes	Documents and correspondence of historical importance	Office Mgr. and Steering Committee testimonials
Founder testimonials of Group history	Area Committee minutes	Service diaries	Newsletters
Old-timer testimonials of AA history	Area Newsletters	Documents related to service experience	News clippings
Early literature (books & pamphlets)	District Committee minutes	1 <sup>st</sup> printings of new AA literature (as well as galley proofs & review copies)	Magazine articles
News clippings and magazine articles about the Group	District Histories	Board, Conference and Regional Forum documents/memorabilia	Group histories
Anniversary flyers	Service Committee minutes	Special Assembly memorabilia	Facility photos
AA event flyers	Documents and correspondence of historical importance	AA event flyers	Documents and correspondence of historical importance
	Important documents for permanent retention		Early literature (books and pamphlets)
	Copy of Registrar data base of Groups and Trusted Servants		Early directories
	Assembly, Convention and Workshop flyers		AA event flyers
	Service Committee history and testimonials		
	AA event flyers		

\* Note: histories and testimonials can be written or audio-taped. Word processing formats are also welcome (CD).

## NETA Archives Committee Information and Guidelines

### ***Sample - Letter of Acknowledgment of Archives Contribution (Letter or email)***

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1. A letter similar to that shown below is mailed to each contributor by the Archives Chair or Alternate or Archivist and Historian. If the contribution is from another area, the letter (or email) should be sent from Delegate to Delegate.
2. As shown on the next following page, the letter of acknowledgment also includes a *Transfer of Gift* (i.e. deed of gift) form. The form is an itemized listing of the contribution together with a description of its physical condition and any terms and conditions specified by the contributor.
3. Information from the Transfer of Gift form is posted to the NETA Archives Inventory Report. Copies of the letters of acknowledgment, Transfer of Gift forms and inventory reports are a part of the NETA Archives collection itself and are available for review by any AA member.

January 1, 2011

John Doe  
123 Fellowship St.  
Dallas, TX 76543

Dear John

This letter acknowledges your contribution to the Area 65 Archives of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Please know that we are most grateful for your contribution and will handle it with loving and professional care. We are sure you understand that this is a permanent contribution to the AA Fellowship Archives and that you are confident we will make the best possible use of it.

This letter also acknowledges that your contribution is a gift to the Archives of the Northeast Texas Area (NETA - Area 65) and the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous and not to me personally.

Thank you again for your loving generosity.

(Signed)

NETA Archives

123 Main St.  
Arlington, TX 76015  
(817) 123-4567

## NETA Archives Committee Information and Guidelines

### **Sample - Archives Transfer of Gift Form (Letter or email)**

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Contributor:

John Doe

Items Contributed:

1<sup>st</sup> edition Big Book - 13<sup>th</sup> printing - circa 1950  
Assortment of 7 early AA pamphlets  
Written history of early AA pioneer Clarence S. - circa 1990

Received By:

Transferred to Chair, NETA Archives.  
Transferred to Archivist and Historian

Physical Condition:

Items are in very good condition.

Statement of Terms and Conditions of the Conveyance of the Gift

Items are transferred to the Archives of the Northeast Texas Area of AA.  
No access restrictions are specified.

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The undersigned certifies that John Doe, the contributor, is the lawful owner of all rights and title of the property described above.

By this document a gift of all rights and title of the items listed above is conveyed to the Archives of the General Service Board and Northeast Texas Area of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ \*\*

Archives Inventory Record Number: 2011-nn \*

(\* year-sequence number - e.g. 2011-01, 2011-02, etc.)

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When contributions (distributions) are made from the NETA Archives Collection to another area, it should be accomplished by a letter or email from Delegate to Delegate.

## NETA Archives Committee Information and Guidelines

### ***Summary of References, Term/Definitions and Collection Guidelines***

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#### **References**

PUBLICATION	CONTENT
AA Guidelines - Archives	AA publication MG-17 - initial guideline information.
Archives WORKBOOK	AA publication M-44I - rich in details.
The AA Archives	AA publication F-47 - overview

#### **Terms/Definitions**

WORD	MEANING
History	Provable fact-based reporting
Editorials	Individual opinion that cannot be proved or disproved
Documents	Any type of AA publication or written materials (e.g. minutes, newsletters, reports, letters and correspondence, flyers, brochures, etc. - does not have to be Conference approved).
Artifacts	Documents, magazine and newspaper articles
Odds and ends	Documents and items having little or no historical importance
Memorabilia	AA related correspondence and photographs
Testimonial	Personal account of experiences
Myth	Fiction based on imagination or belief
Repository	Library of historical papers, artifacts and memorabilia

#### **Collection Guidelines**

INCLUDE	EXCLUDE
History	Editorials or information that cannot be verified
Artifacts	Odds and ends
Memorabilia	Curios and throw-away items
Testimonials	Myths and second-hand reports
Repository (library)	Making it a storage area for anything and everything

## NETA Archives Committee Information and Guidelines

### ***Version History***

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Version 1.0 approved by NETA Archives Committee August 29, 2002

Version 1.1 approved by NETA Archives Committee March 2, 2003

Version 1.2 approved by NETA Archives Committee September 4, 2003

Change the limit of the number of copies of the same publication in the collection from 2 to 3. Reasons: to eventually have 2 portable displays to take to groups and also rotate copies displayed so that the same copy is handled over and over.

Version 1.3 approved by NETA Archives Committee August 19, 2004

Drop all the automatic memberships based on past service jobs and define membership as "All members serving in an Archives or Historian service position at the Group, District or Area level plus any AA member in the Area who volunteers to serve."

Version 2.0 approved by NETA Archives Committee April 21, 2011

Major update to document evolving practices and to provide job descriptions for Archives Committee service positions. Also includes finance procedures for the management of direct contributions to the Archives Committee by groups and members.

Approved by Area Committee [pending review]